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Agre et al.

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(54) **CRIB AND TODDLER BED ELEVATION DEVICE**

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(51) **Int. Cl.**
A47C 21/00 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **5/509.1**; 5/660; 248/188.2

(58) **Field of Classification Search** 5/660, 5/509.1, 11, 658; 248/188.2
See application file for complete search history.

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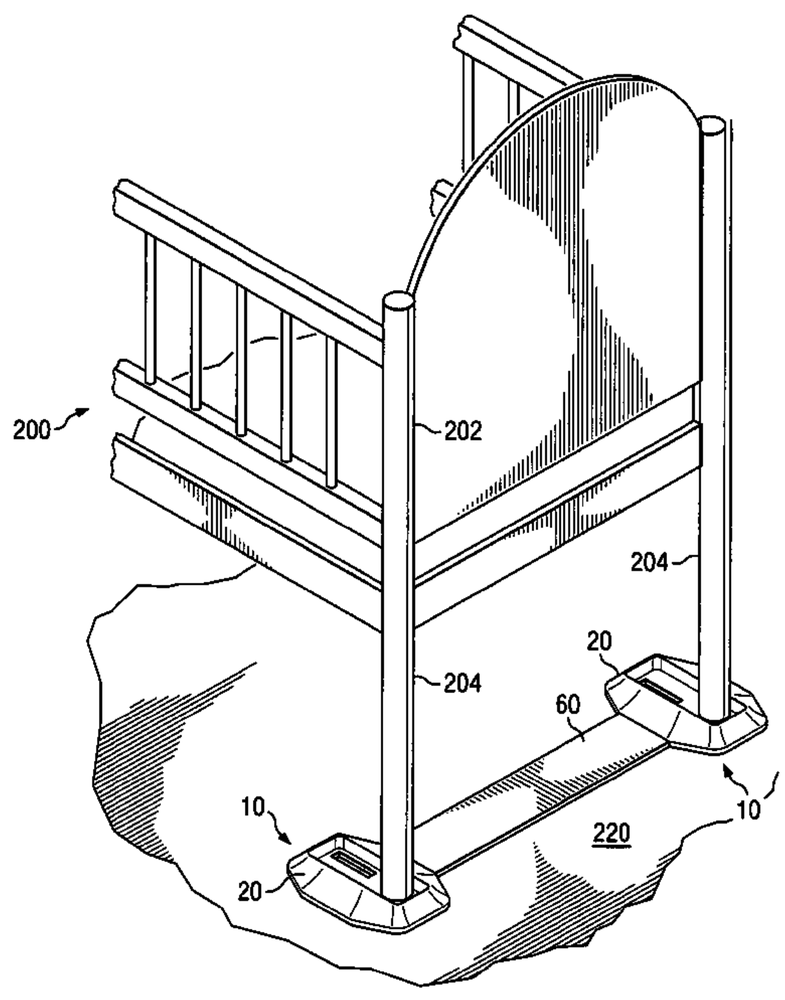
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A crib and toddler elevation device having selectively adjustable height and tilt angle is described. The elevator includes a base for placing on the floor and for receiving the legs of the crib or toddler bed. The elevator also includes a variety of mechanisms for adjusting the height of the crib or toddler bed, including elevating blocks. The elevator may also include an optional centerpiece to facilitate installation of the crib or toddler legs into the elevator.

13 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets



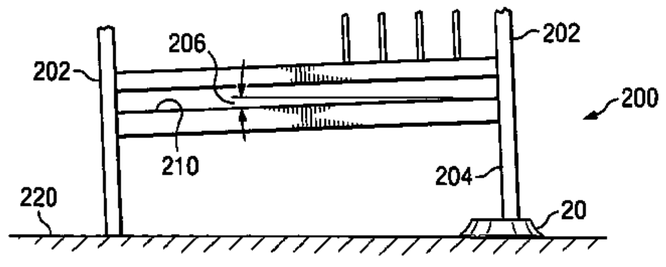


FIG. 1

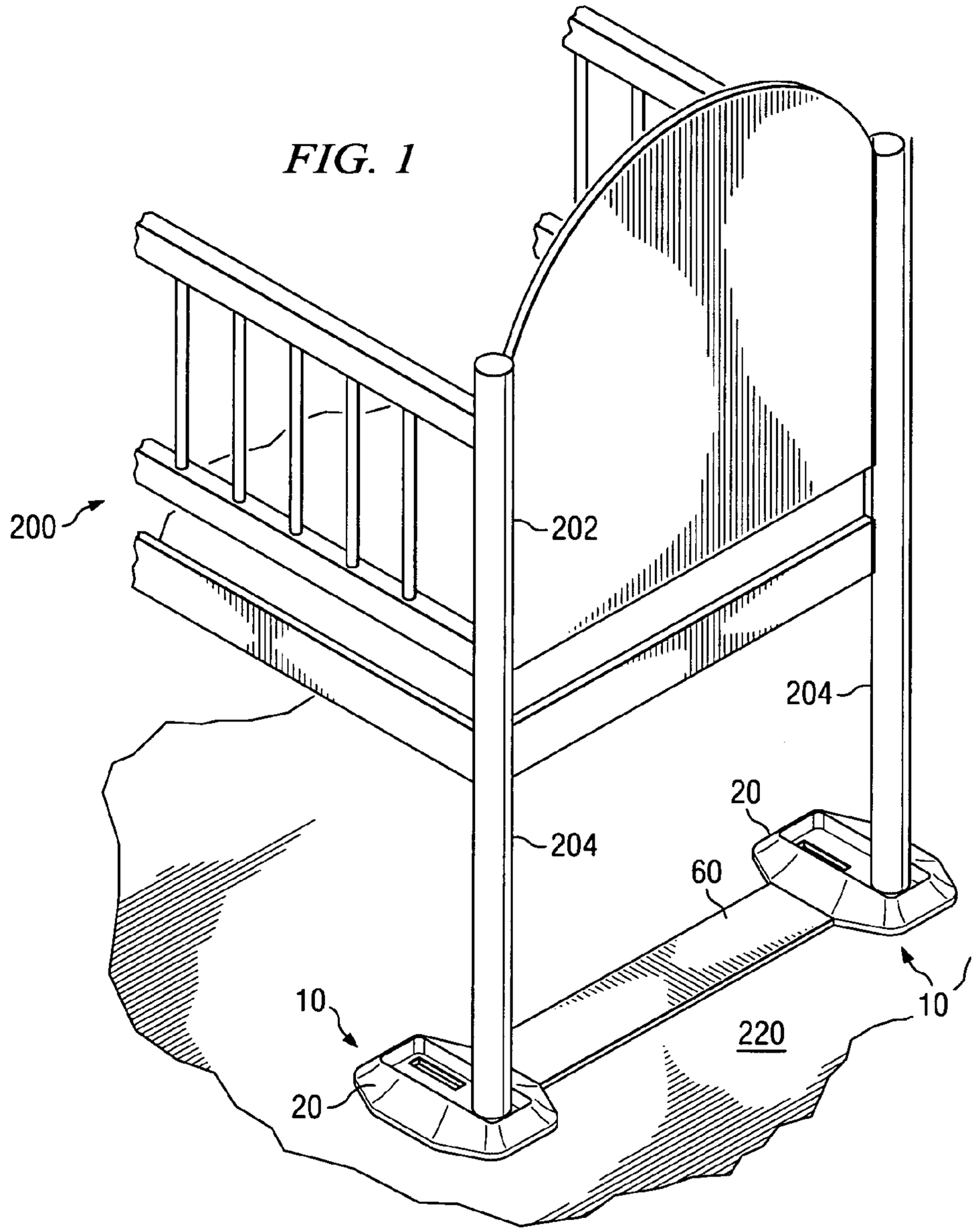
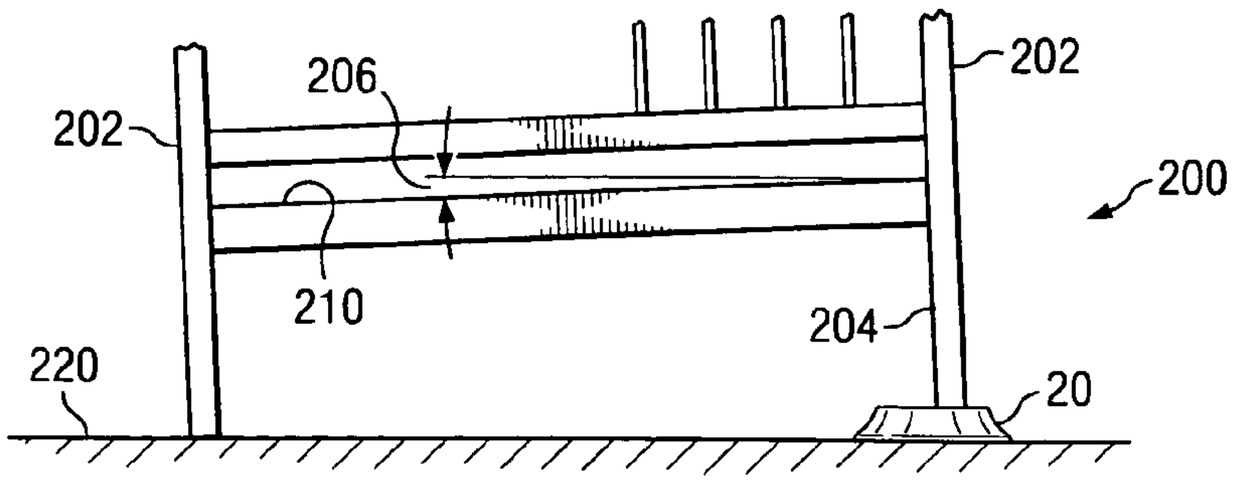


FIG. 2



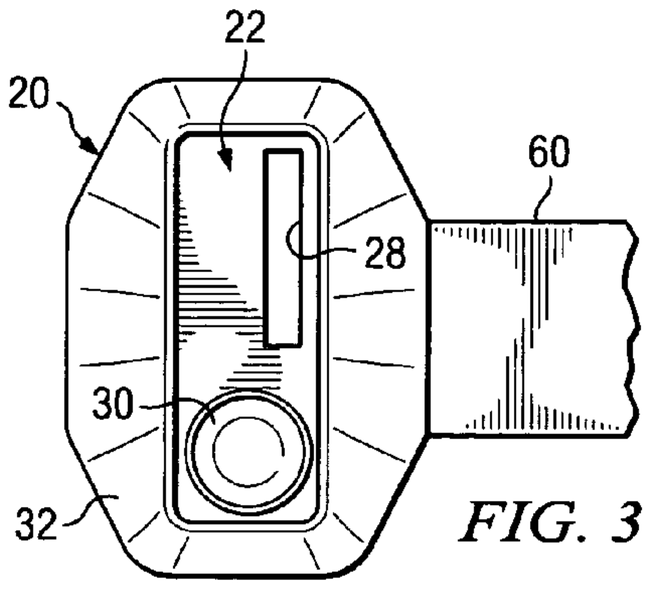
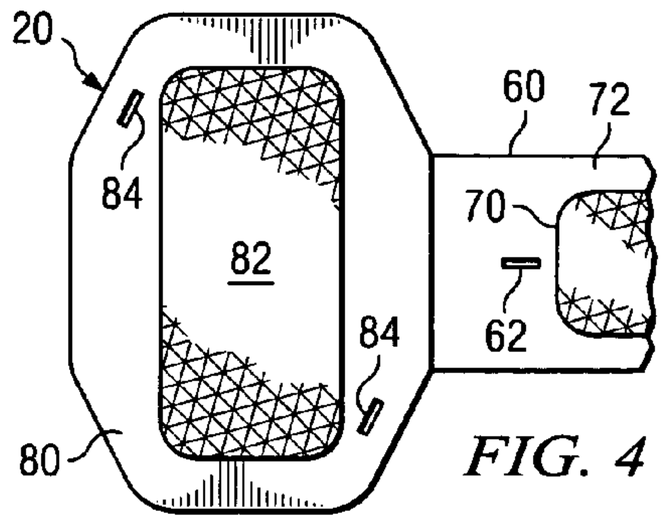


FIG. 3



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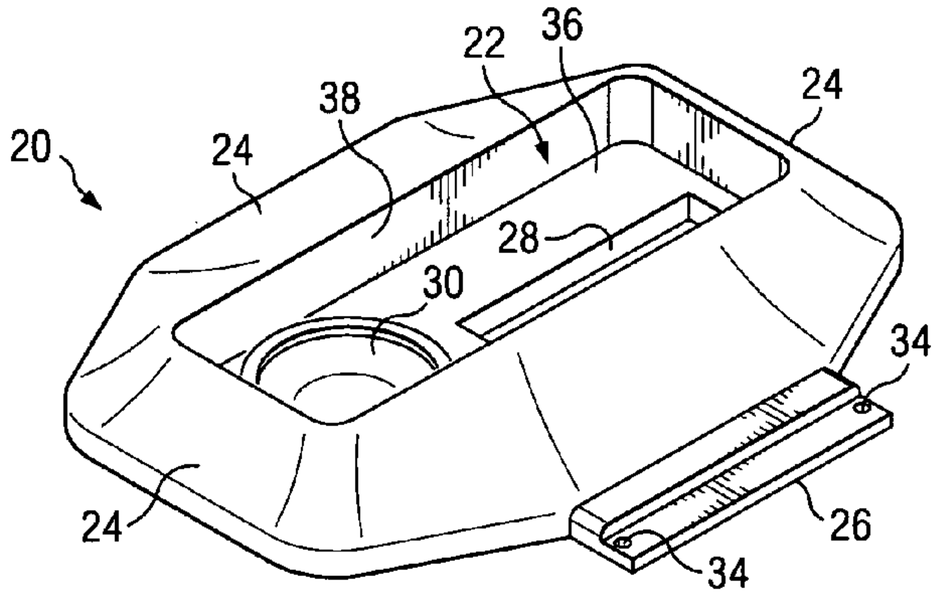


FIG. 5

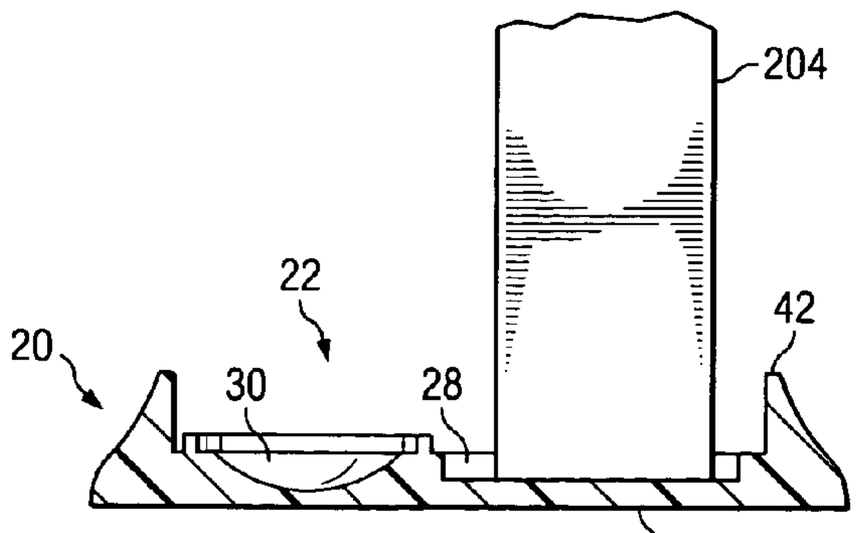


FIG. 6

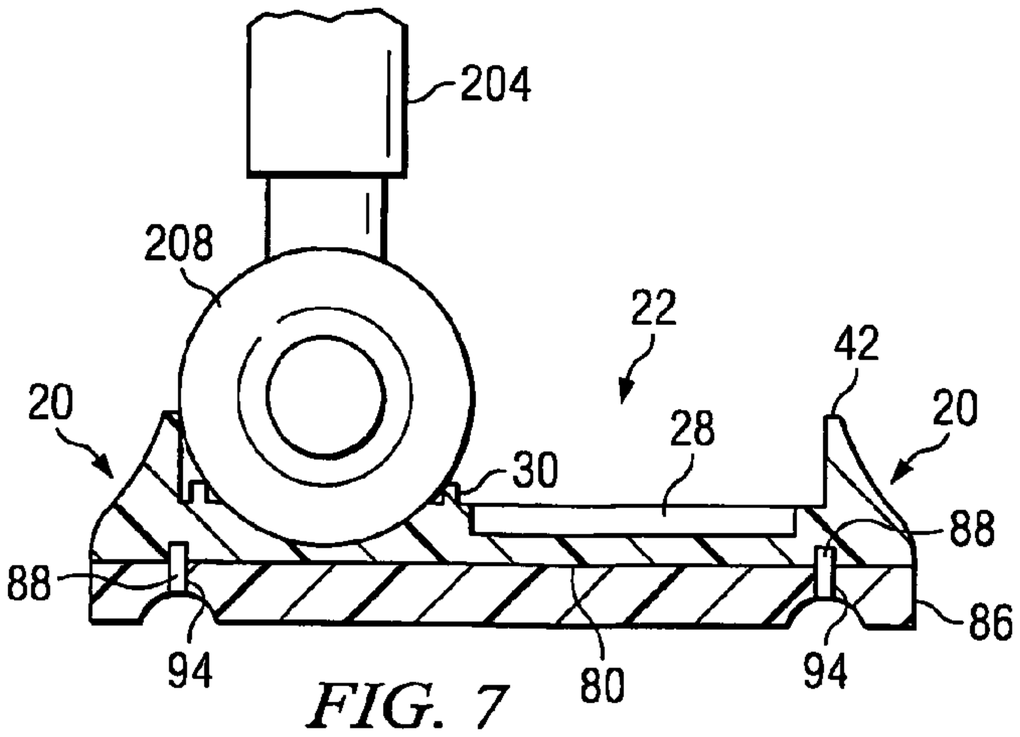


FIG. 7

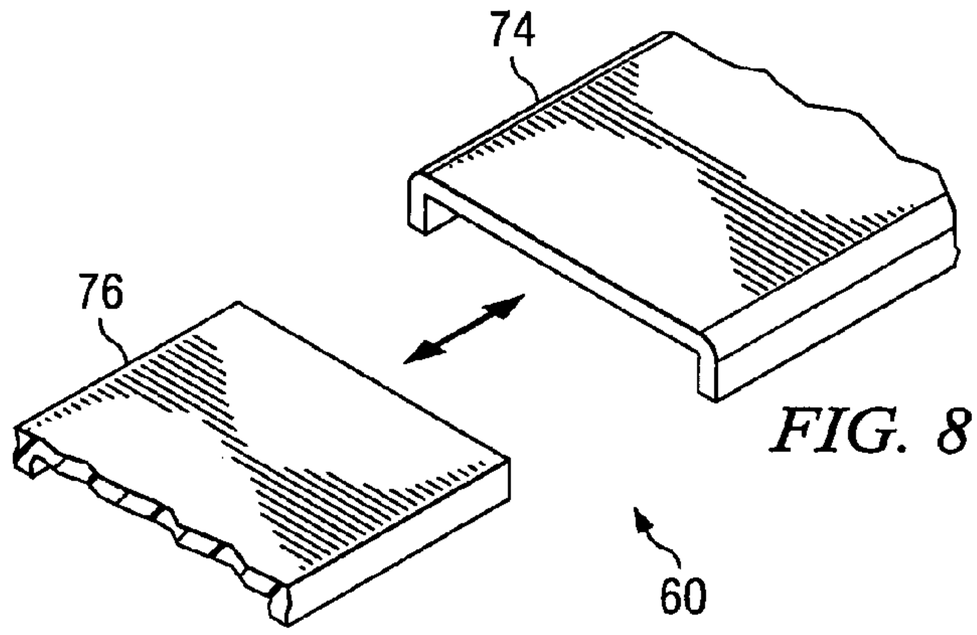
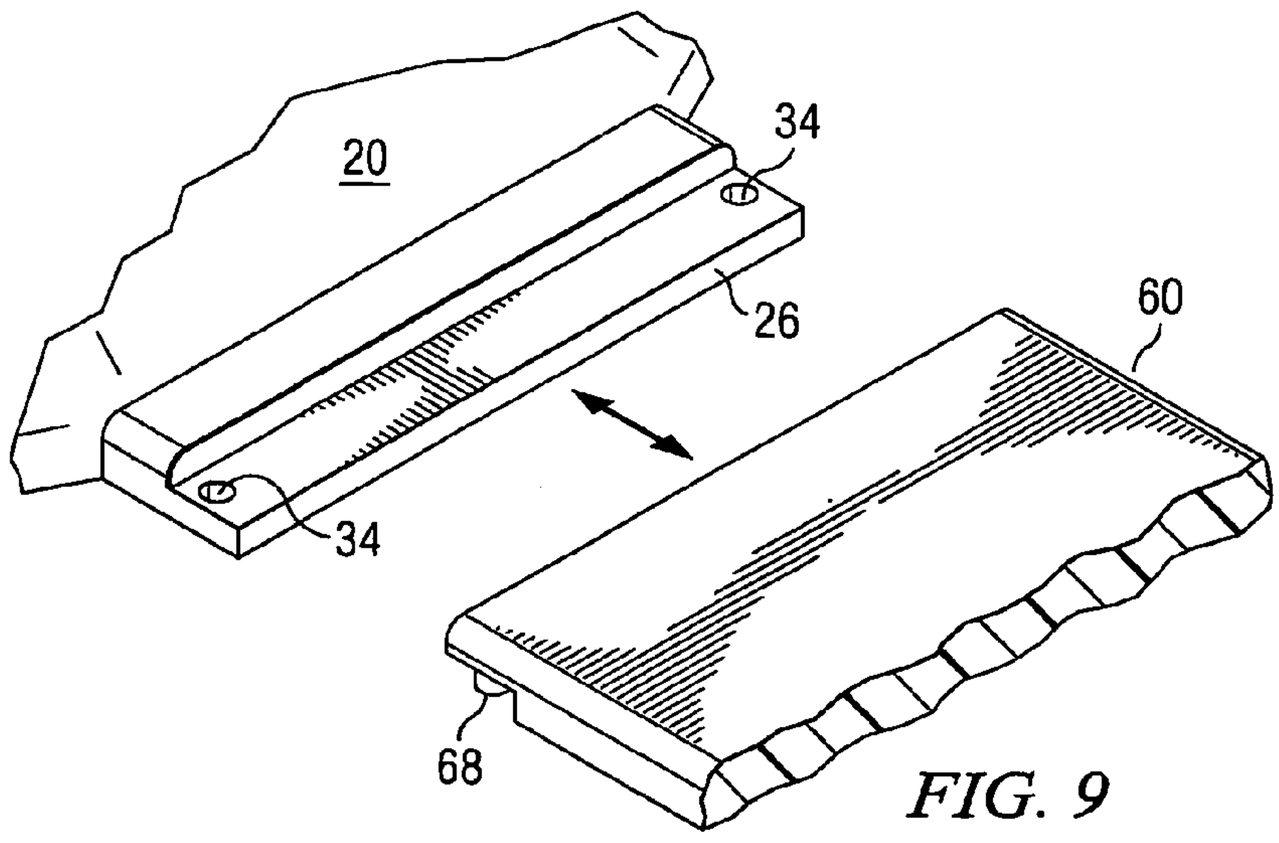


FIG. 8



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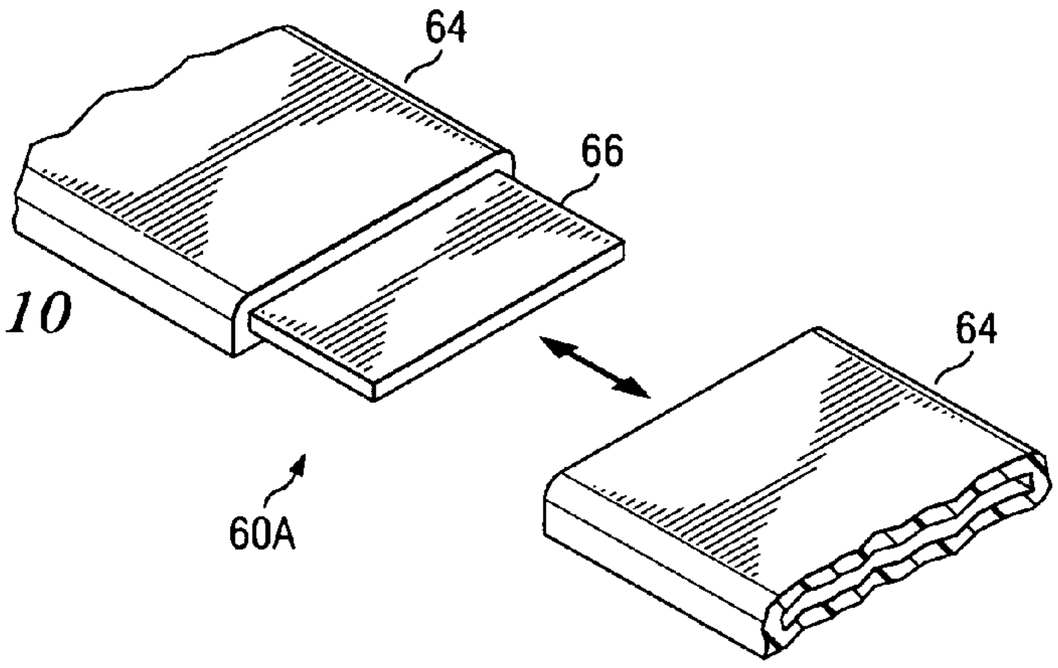
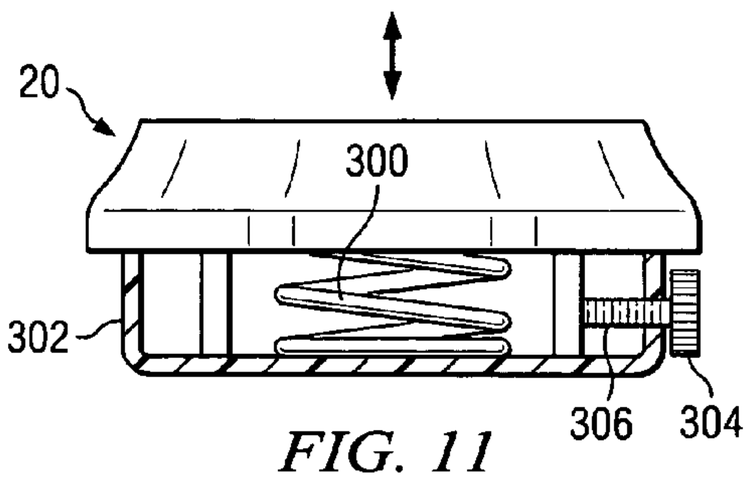


FIG. 10



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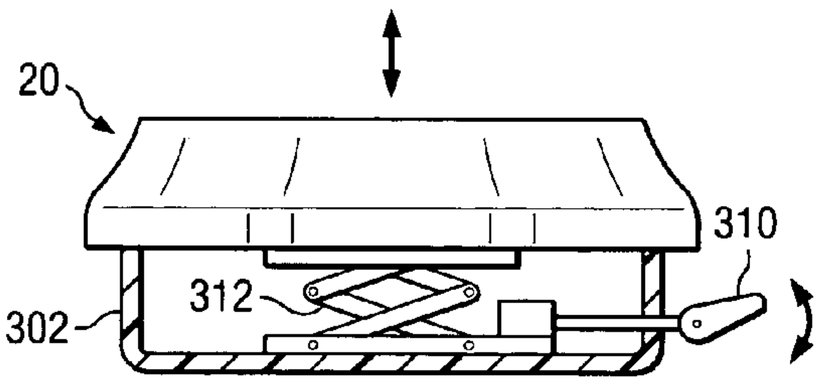


FIG. 12

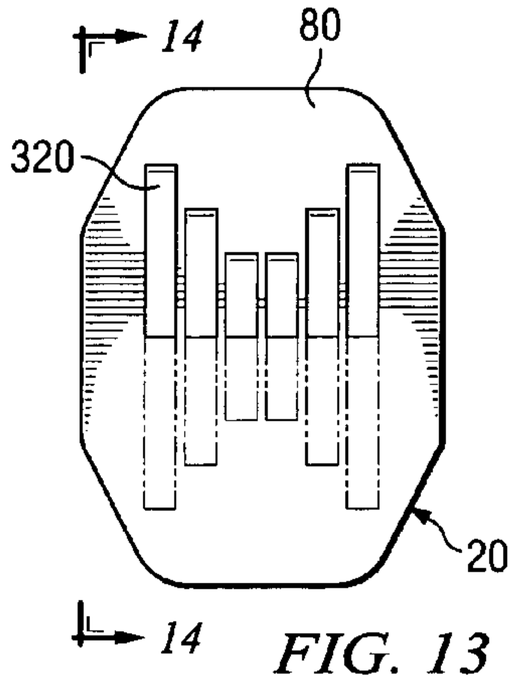


FIG. 13

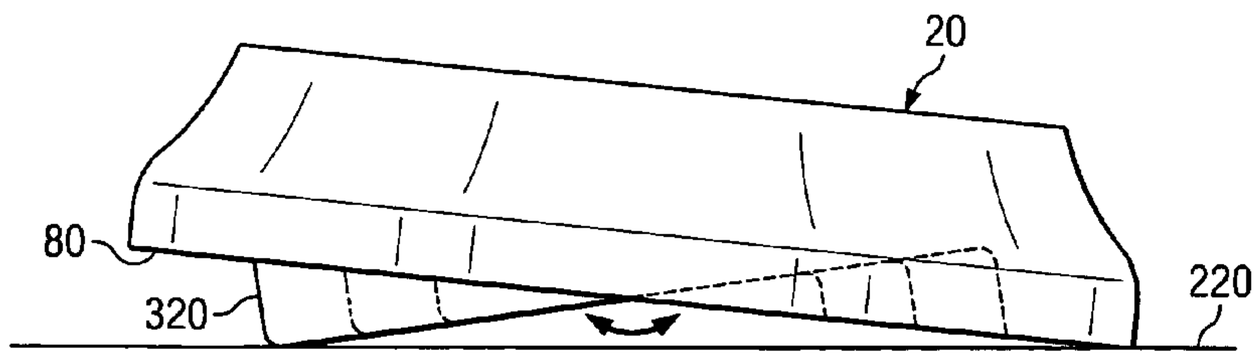


FIG. 14

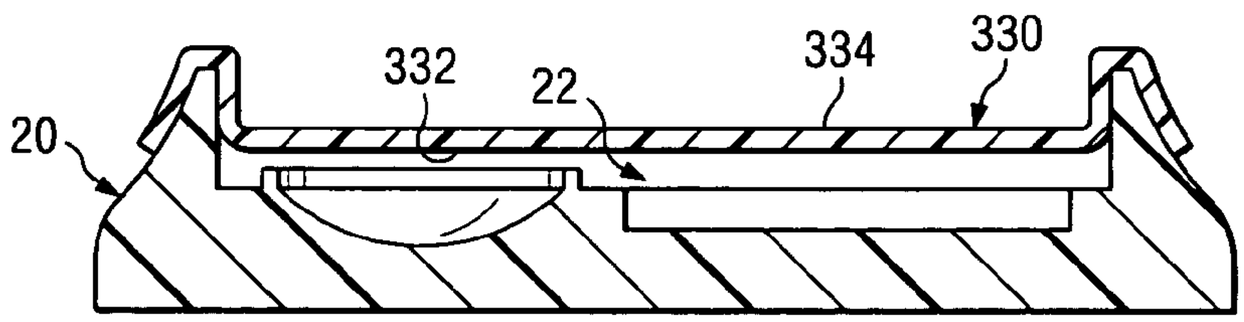


FIG. 15

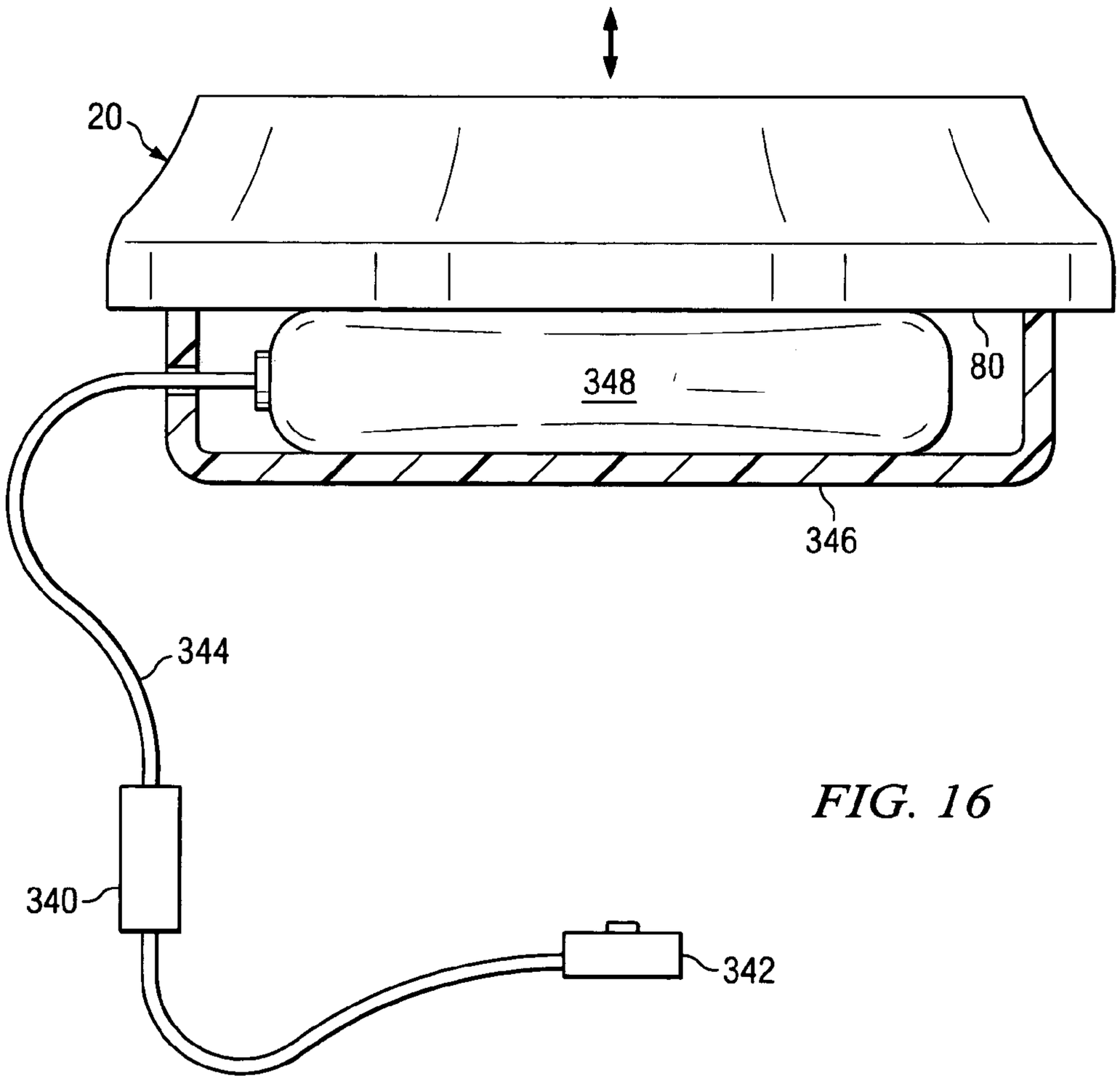


FIG. 16

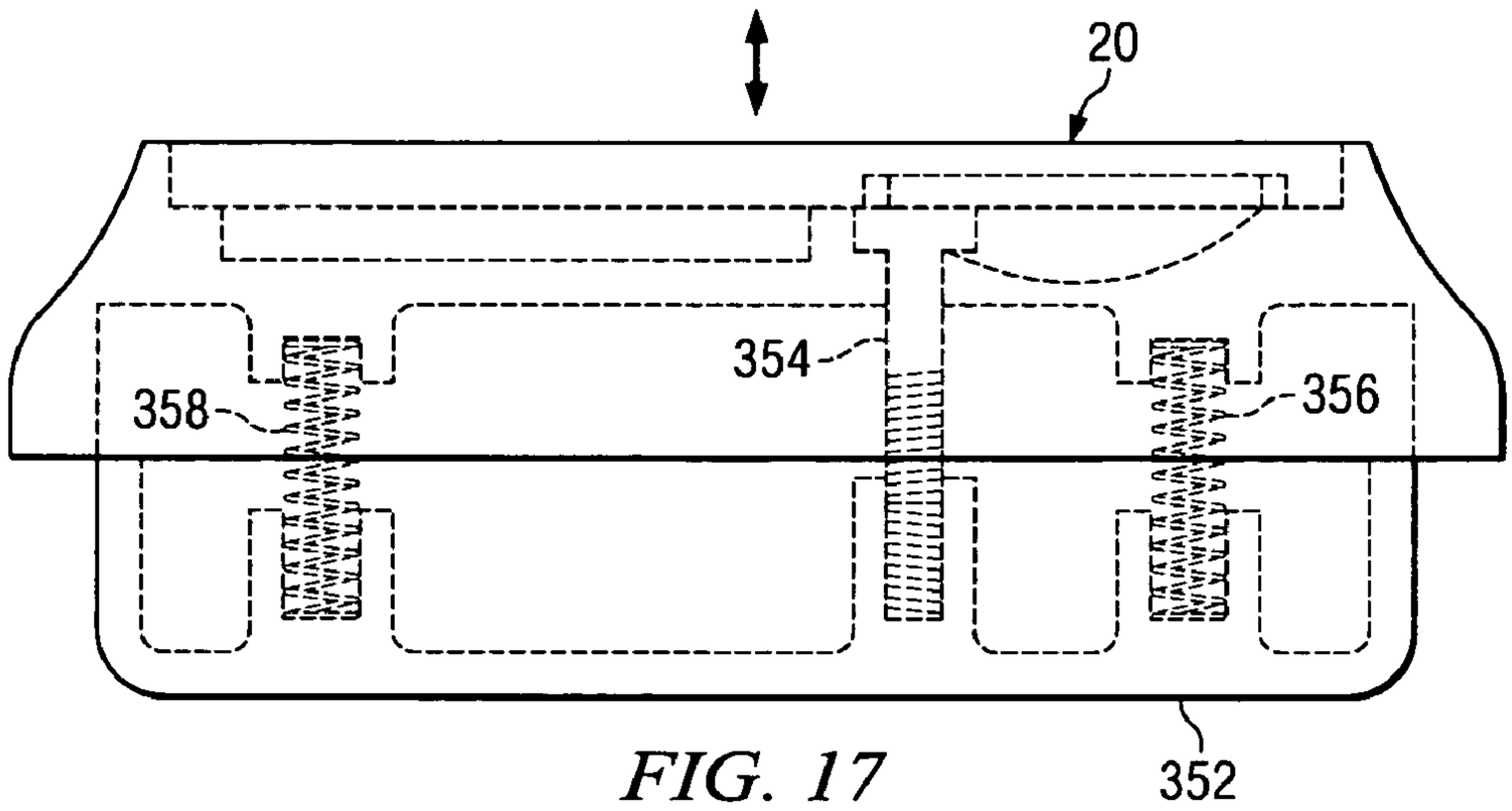


FIG. 17

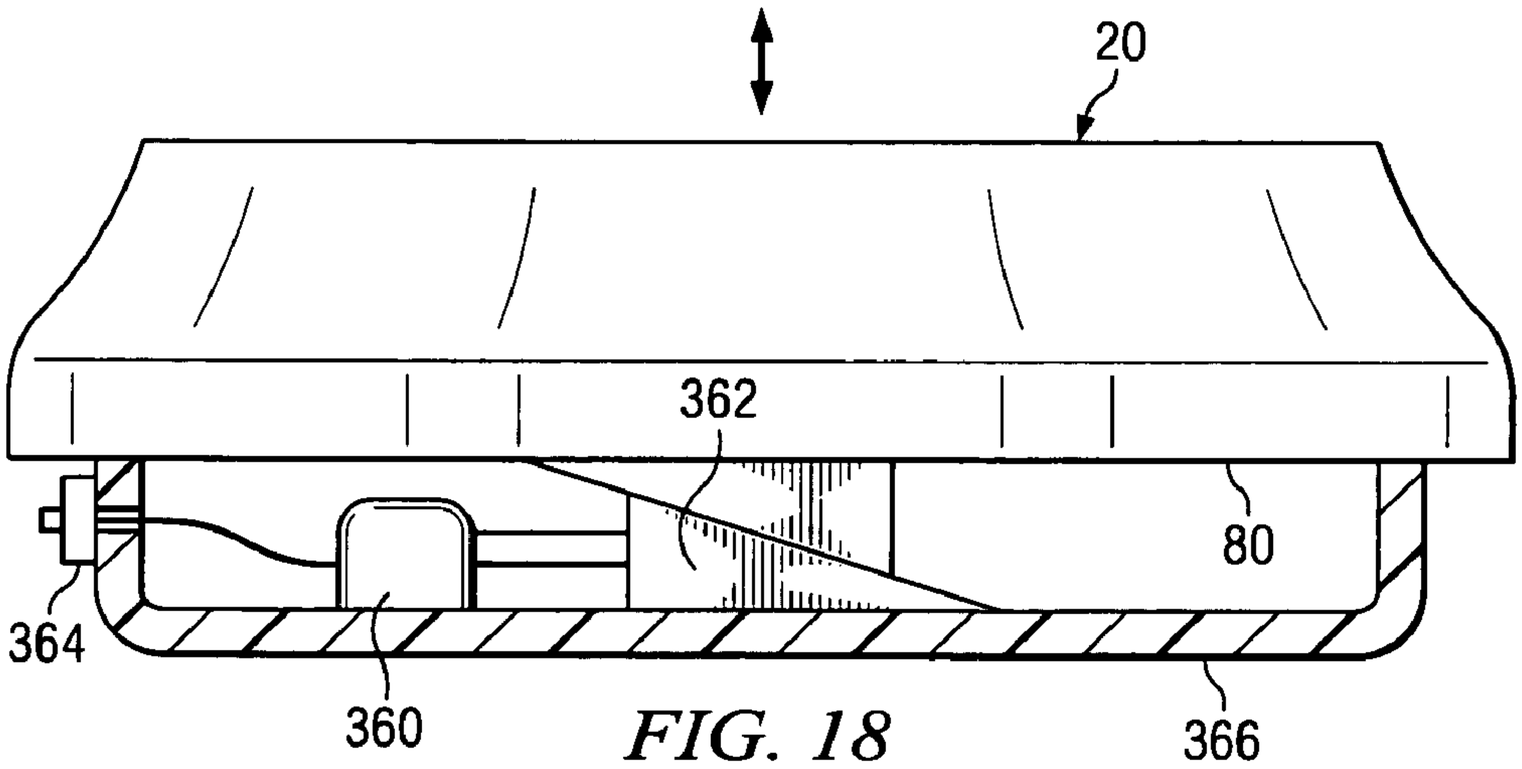


FIG. 18

FIG. 19

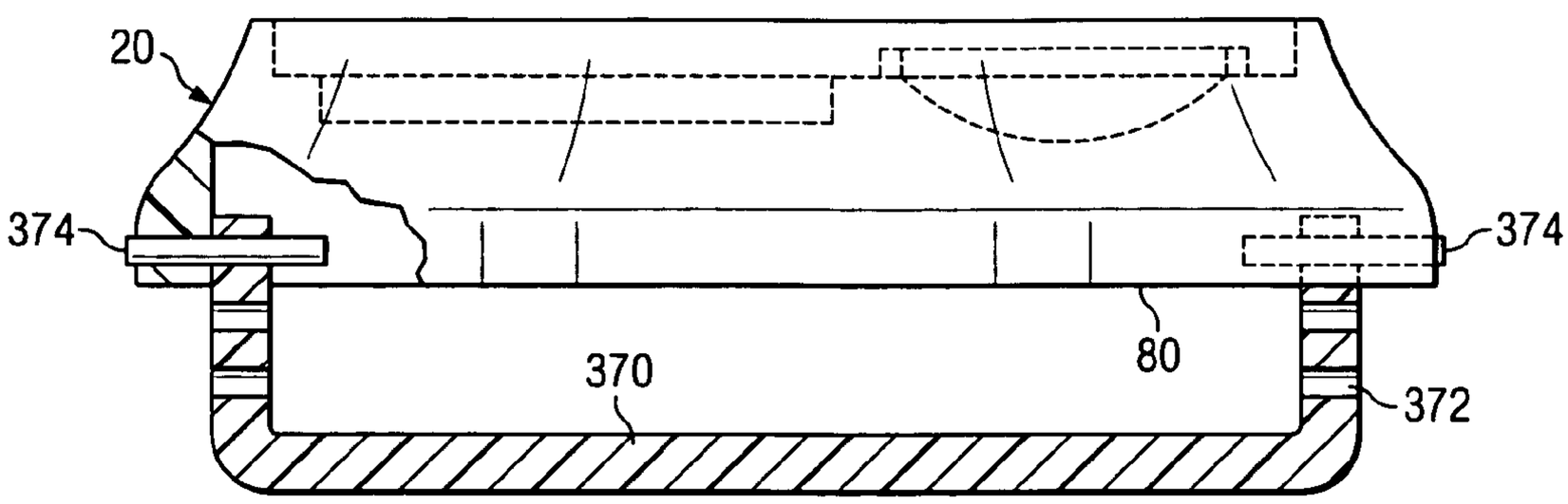


FIG. 20

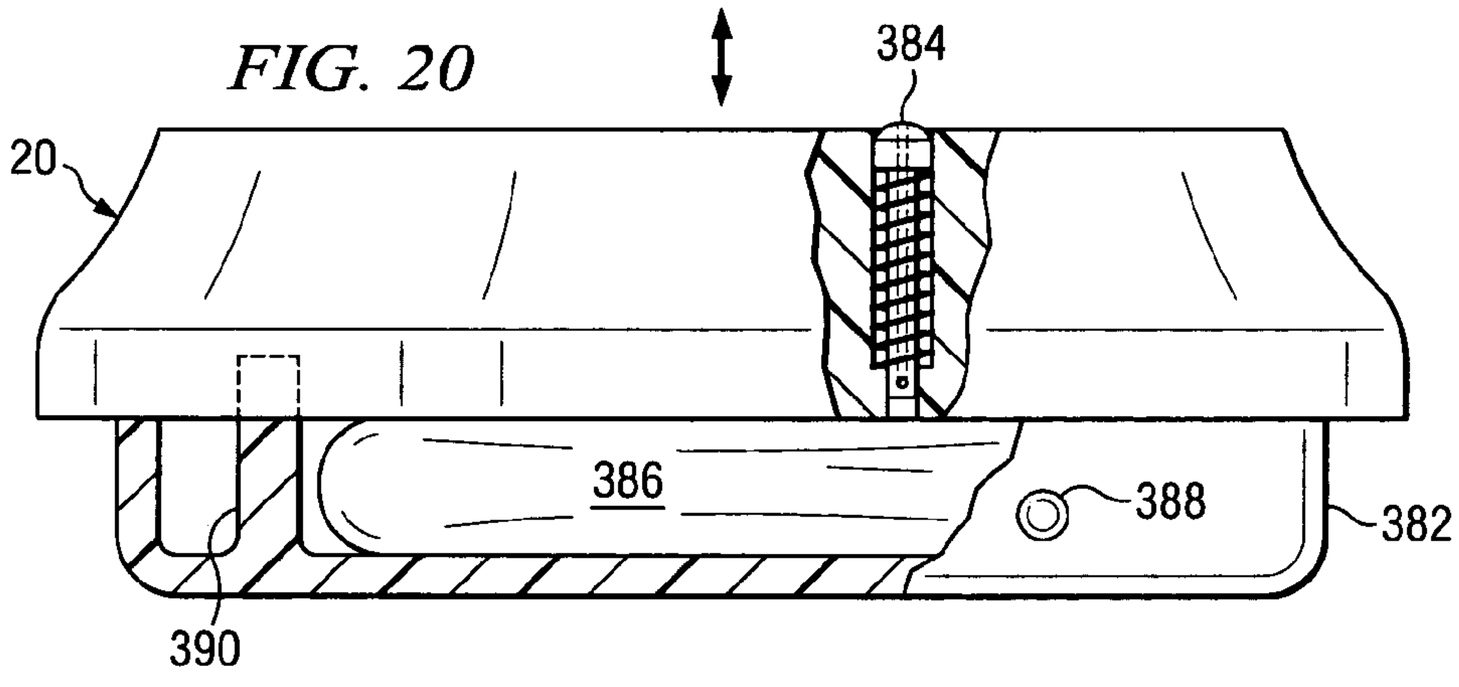
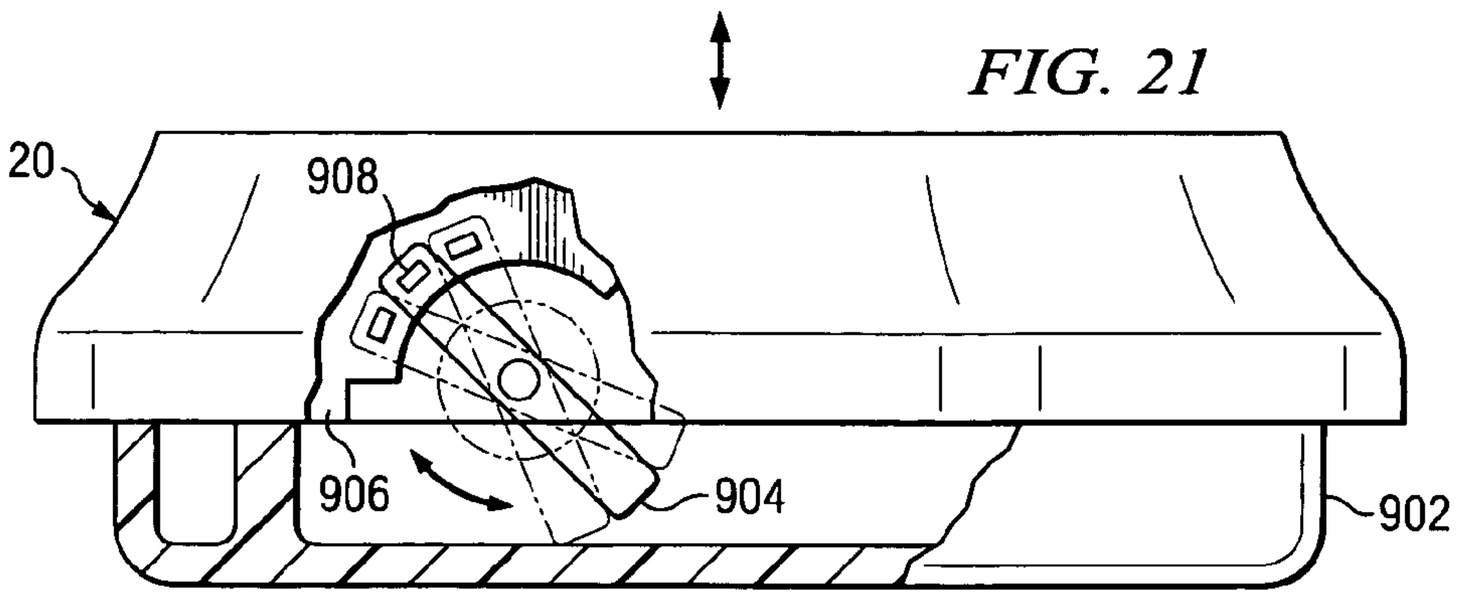


FIG. 21



CRIB AND TODDLER BED ELEVATION DEVICE

BACKGROUND

The present invention relates generally to crib and toddler bed elevators and in particular to an elevator capable of being variably adjusted and further capable of securely elevating various types of cribs and toddler beds.

Physicians and in particular pediatricians advise parents on occasion to elevate the head of their child's crib or toddler bed to alleviate conditions such as gastro-esophageal reflux, colds, and sinusitis. Elevating the head of the crib or toddler bed introduces a tilt to the sleeping surface, which has beneficial physiologic effects. For example, a baby suffering from acid reflux may obtain relief from tilting of his crib, which allows gravity to keep stomach acid from moving up into the baby's esophagus. Elevation also assists children suffering from earaches, head congestion, sore throats, and sinusitis by elevating the head above the body, and thereby enhancing drainage of the sinuses.

Depending upon the condition suffered by the child and its degree, a physician may direct the parents to tilt the bed at varying angles or he may direct the parents to tilt the bed at an initial angle and then adjust the tilt angle later to suit the child's conditions. Thus, a need exists for a crib and toddler bed elevator that is selectively and variably adjustable. Because the elevator is used around small children and toddlers, a need also exists for an elevator that includes safety features in the event a small child or toddler falls onto or strikes the elevator.

Adult bed elevators are common in the art. Examples of adult bed elevators include U.S. Pat. Nos. 2,893,164; 2,933,850; 5,224,227; 5,345,631; 6,012,185; 6,575,414 B2; and U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/777,517 (Pub. No. U.S. 2001/0023509 A1). However, none of these patents provide a selectively adjustable system specifically designed for cribs or toddler beds. Due to size differences between cribs and adult beds and other design considerations, including safety, adult bed elevators are not generally suitable for cribs and toddler beds. For example, many of the adult bed elevators are made of hard material and have straight edges, which pose a risk to small children and toddlers. Adult bed elevators known in the art, typically comprised of two blocks, also do not provide a means for a user to quickly and easily install both elevator blocks nearly simultaneously. This feature is desirable because a parent will often wish to install a crib/toddler bed elevator while holding a child. A need exists, therefore, for an elevator specifically adapted for cribs and toddler beds.

Devices that elevate the mattress, as opposed to the legs, of a crib are also known in the art. U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,208,925 and 6,378,151 are examples. These patents do not adequately address the above problems because, among other things, both require a parent to expend considerable effort installing and removing the elevation devices. This would be difficult, if not impossible, to do while holding a small child. In addition, it is preferable that a mattress should be tight against all crib and toddler bed wall sides. Thus, there is a need to raise and lower the bed, rather than the mattress.

The present invention overcomes the limitations of the prior art devices and provides a safe, simple, and easy to install means for elevating a crib or toddler bed to assist a baby suffering from acid reflux, sinusitis, allergies, head congestion, or other conditions.

All references cited herein are incorporated by reference to the maximum extent allowable by law. To the extent a reference may not be fully incorporated herein, it is incorporated by reference for background purposes and indicative of the knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the art.

SUMMARY

The present invention is directed to a system and apparatus that satisfies the above-identified needs. The apparatus of the present invention comprises one or more base blocks **20** having a bottom surface **80**, an outer side **24**, an inner side **26**, upper surface **42**, and a well **22** located on the upper surface of the outer and inner sides. The well **22** is a recessed area having side walls **38** and a bottom surface **36** and is adapted to accept a leg **204** of a crib or toddler bed **200**. Once the leg **204** is inserted into the well **22**, the crib or toddler bed **200** will be elevated to a suitable height and angle to induce the health and other benefits discussed above.

In another embodiment of the present invention, a centerpiece **60** is provided. Each end of the centerpiece **60** is secured to the inner side **26** of each base block **20**, thereby making the elements substantially rigid. Once the elements are secured, a user can install both base blocks **20** nearly simultaneously by moving the centerpiece **60** to place the base blocks **20** beneath the legs **204** of the crib or toddler bed **200**.

In another embodiment of the present invention, means for adjusting the elevation and angle of tilt of the crib or toddler bed **204** are provided. In one embodiment, variable elevation blocks **86** of varying heights are used to selectively elevate the base blocks **20** to predetermined heights in order to achieve a selected tilt angle **206**. The variable elevation blocks **86** are placed beneath and secured to the lower surface **80** of the base blocks **20**.

In another embodiment of the present invention, rounded edges for the exterior surfaces of the base blocks **20** and centerpiece **60**, if used, are provided. Padding **32** for the exterior surfaces is also provided. The rounded edges and padding enhance the safety of the apparatus in the event a small child or toddler falls onto or strikes the apparatus.

In another embodiment of the present invention, a means for securing a variety of crib and toddler bed legs **204** is provided. Commercially available cribs and toddler beds **200** use a variety of leg shapes. In one embodiment, the well **22** includes a relatively narrow slot **28** and a ring **30** for accepting narrow legs or legs **204** that have rollers, coasters, or ball-shaped ends.

Other objects, features, and advantages of the present invention will become apparent with reference to the drawings and detailed description that follow.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of the present invention illustrating crib **200** installed on crib elevator **10**.

FIG. **2** is a side view of the present invention illustrating crib **200** installed on crib elevator **10** with a tilt angle **206**.

FIG. **3** is top view of the present invention illustrating base block **20** and centerpiece **60**.

FIG. **4** is a bottom view of the present invention illustrating base block **20**, optional non-slip surface **82**, centerpiece **60**, and optional non-slip surface **70**.

FIG. **5** is a perspective view of the present invention illustrating base block **20**.

FIG. **6** is a side view of the present invention illustrating crib leg **204** installed in well **22** of base block **20**.

FIG. **7** is a side view of another embodiment of the present invention illustrating crib leg **204** with coaster or roller **208** installed in well **22** of base block **20**.

FIG. **8** is a perspective view of the present invention illustrating centerpiece **60** comprised of an outer sleeve **74** and inner sleeve **76**.

FIG. **9** is a side view of an embodiment of the present invention illustrating centerpiece **60** and base block **20**.

FIG. **10** is a perspective view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention illustrating outer sleeve **64** and inner shaft **66** of centerpiece **60**A.

FIG. **11** is a side view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention illustrating an alternative height-adjustment means employing a spring **300**.

FIG. **12** is a side view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention illustrating an alternative height-adjustment means employing a lever **310**.

FIG. **13** is a bottom view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention illustrating an alternative height-adjustment means employing spring-loaded tabs **320**.

FIG. **14** is a side view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention illustrating an alternative height-adjustment means employing spring-loaded tabs **320**.

FIG. **15** is a side view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention illustrating an alternative height-adjustment means employing an insert **330**.

FIG. **16** is a side view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention illustrating an alternative height-adjustment means employing an air cartridge **340**.

FIG. **17** is a side view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention illustrating an alternative height-adjustment means employing an adjustment screw **354** and springs **356** and **358**.

FIG. **18** is a side view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention illustrating an alternative height-adjustment means employing a motor **360**.

FIG. **19** is a side view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention illustrating an alternative height-adjustment means employing spring-loaded pins **374**.

FIG. **20** is a side view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention illustrating an alternative height-adjustment means employing an air control valve **384**.

FIG. **21** is a side view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention illustrating an alternative height-adjustment means employing a lever **904**.

DESCRIPTION

In the following detailed description of the preferred embodiments, reference is made to the accompanying drawings, which form a part hereof, and in which is shown by way of illustration specific preferred embodiments in which the invention may be practiced. These embodiments are described in sufficient detail to enable those skilled in the art to practice the invention, and it is understood that other embodiments may be utilized and that logical changes may be made without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention. To avoid detail not necessary to enable those skilled in the art to practice the invention, the description may omit certain information known to those skilled in the art. The following detailed description is, therefore, not to be taken in a limiting sense, and the scope of the present invention is defined only by the appended claims.

The present invention is adapted to work equally well with cribs and toddler beds. For brevity, the description will use "crib" to mean both a crib and a toddler bed. Referring to FIG. **1**, a crib **200** is illustrated installed into elevator **10**.

FIG. **2** illustrates a side view of the crib **200** and the elevator **10**. As shown in the FIG. **1**, one end of the crib **200** is elevated by elevator **10** resting on floor **220**. The elevation of one end of the crib **200** creates a tilt angle **206** (shown in FIG. **2**) relative to the horizontal. This tilt to sleeping surface **210** allows for the upper extremity of an infant or child to be higher than the child's abdomen and lower extremity or vice versa.

Elevator **10** includes the base blocks **20** and optional centerpiece **60**. As shown in FIGS. **3**, **4**, and **5**, the base block **20** has a bottom surface **80**, upper surface **42**, outer sides **24**, inner side **26**, and a well **22**. A non-slip surface **82** such as rubber or the like material may optionally be added to the bottom surface **80** to further enhance the base block **20**'s ability to resist movement while the crib **200** is installed. In the preferred embodiment of the present invention, slots **84** are included on bottom surface **80** for securing the base block **20** to optional variable elevation block **86** (shown in FIG. **7**). Typically, the base block **20** is 6 to 7 inches wide and 3 to 4 inches in height.

Turning to FIG. **5**, well **22** of the base block **20** is illustrated. The well **22** is comprised of side walls **38** and bottom surface **36**. The side walls **38** may be either sloped or substantially vertical. The well **22** is of sufficient depth and width to accommodate the leg **204** of the crib **200** and securely maintain it. Preferably, the bottom surface **36** of the well **22** is between ⅜ to ⅝ inches above the bottom surface **80** of base block **20**. The bottom surface **36** of well **22** may be sloped to enhance performance of the base block **20** by increasing the area of contact between the bottom surface **36** and leg **204**. FIG. **5** illustrates a rectangular-shaped well **22**. The well **22** may be a round, oval, square, or other shape so long as it is capable of accommodating legs of common cribs and toddler beds. Cribs and toddler beds commonly use different legs structures, such as rectangular-shaped, cylindrical, and square-shaped legs of varying sizes. Coasters or rollers may also be used. Therefore, well **22** should be of sufficient width and depth to accommodate these varying sizes of legs. A well **22** depth of 1 to 2.5 inches and a width of 1 to 4 inches are preferred.

The well **22** may also include a slot **28** and ring **30**. Where the crib leg **200** is a relatively narrow rectangular shape, it can be inserted into slot **28** (shown in FIG. **6**) located in the bottom surface **36** of the well **22**. For a leg with a roller, coaster, or ball-shaped end, the leg can be installed as shown in FIG. **7** such that it rests on ring **30** on the bottom surface **36** of the well **22**. Ring **30** will assist in restraining lateral movement of the roller, coaster, or ball within the well **22**, and is preferably constructed of rubber or the like material. A relatively wide leg **204** without a roller, coaster, or ball is installed by inserting the leg **204** into the well **22** where it will rest primarily on the bottom surface **36**. Thus, the various embodiments of the invention can accommodate a variety of leg shapes. One skilled in the art would appreciate the multitude of additional structures and manners in which crib and toddler legs can be secured in the base block **20**.

The base block **20**, including the bottom surface **36** and the inner walls **38** are preferably constructed of a rigid material such as plastic, hard rubber, wood, metal, and the like. A material that is economical to manufacture, durable in use, and refined in appearance is preferred. One skilled in the art would appreciate the different types of materials, which may be used. In the preferred embodiment, all exposed surfaces of the base block **20**, including the edges of outer sides **24**, the inner side **26**, the well **22**, the inner walls **38**, and the bottom surface **80**, should be substantially rounded. An edge of at least 1/16 of an inch in radius is

preferred. Rounded edges are preferred over straight edges because they enhance the safety of the device and lessen the chance that a small child may be injured by falling onto or striking the base blocks **20**. As shown in FIG. **3**, padding **32** may optionally be attached over the exposed or exterior surfaces of the base block **20** to enhance the safety of the device. Padding **32** can also be attached to the optional centerpiece **60**. Padding **32** can be made of cotton, synthetic material, rubber, foam, and any other suitable material. Preferably, outer sides **24** and inner side **26** slope downward from their respective intersections with the upper edge of well **22** to bottom surface **80** of the base block. These outer surfaces are preferably concave in shape and are a further enhancement of the safety of the device. Substantially straight surfaces and edges, however, may be used, but sloping surfaces and rounded edges are preferred as they enhance the safety of the device.

In the preferred embodiment, variable height adjustment blocks **86** (also referred to as variable elevation blocks) are used to allow a user to selectively adjust the height of the elevation and hence tilt angle **206**. The blocks can be constructed of materials similar to the base block **20**. In the preferred embodiment, all exposed edges of the variable elevation block **86** are substantially rounded similar to the base block **20**. FIG. **7** illustrates a side view of a base block **20** with variable elevation block **86** installed. Variable elevation block **86** preferably includes studs or the like structure to secure it to bottom surface **80** of the base block **20**. As shown in the figure, studs **88** protrude through slots **84** of the base block **20**. This mechanism resists movement of the variable elevation block **86** relative to the base block **20**. An optional non-slip surface **92** (not shown) is preferably disposed on bottom surface **90** of variable elevation block **86**. Variable elevation block **86** may also include slots **94** similar to slots **84** of the base block **20** so that additional variable elevation blocks **86** may be used to further increase the height of the crib **200**. The additional variable elevation blocks **86** may be secured in the same manner as the base block **20** is secured to variable elevation block **86**.

Variable elevation blocks **86** of different heights may be used as well to vary the height of the crib **200**. For example, blocks with a height of ½ an inch, 1 inch, 2 inches, and the like can be used alone or in combination to provide a variety of selectable heights. Variable elevation block **86** may either have a flat upper surface substantially parallel to its bottom surface or the upper surface may be sloped. The latter is preferred because it enhances the elevation of the crib **200** by increasing the surface area of contact between leg **204** and well **22**.

To achieve the following angles with a common crib that is 54 inches in length, the following elevation heights are used:

Elevation Height	Tilt Angle
.5"	.52 degree
1"	1.06 degrees
2"	2.12 degrees
3"	3.18 degrees
4"	4.25 degrees

A tilt angle **206** of 1 to 4.5 degrees is preferred. One skilled in the art, however, will recognize that lesser or greater angles can be used depending upon the purposes for which the elevator **10** is used.

Because adult beds are considerably longer than the average crib or toddler bed, adult bed elevators known in the art will not produce the same or similar desired results. For example, a three-inch bed elevator used on an adult bed 82 inches in length will create an approximate 2.1-degree tilt angle. This is considerably less than the approximate 3.2-degree angle produced by the present invention for a crib 54 inches in length. For most applications, an elevation of 1.5 to 3 inches is optimal for a crib 54 inches in length.

In addition to variable elevation blocks **86**, several other mechanisms and means can be used to selectively and variably adjust the height of the base blocks **20**. FIG. **11** illustrates a mechanism comprised of a spring **300** located in a housing **302** and a knob **304** mounted on a screw **306**. The height of the base block **20** can be adjusted by rotating the knob **304**, which alters the force on the spring **300**, thereby raising or lowering the base block **20**. Alternatively, a large screw (not shown) can be used to adjust the height of the base block **20**, which causes the block to move up or down depending on how the screw is turned.

In an alternative embodiment, a lever **310** mechanically coupled to a jack mechanism **312**, similar to a jack for an automobile, is included with the base block **20**. As shown in FIG. **12**, the base block **20** may be raised by pressing on the lever **310** or lowered by raising up on the lever **310**.

In an alternative embodiment, shown in FIGS. **13** and **14**, optional spring-loaded tabs **320** are installed in the bottom surface **80** of the base block **20**. The elevation of the base block **20** can be adjusted by pressing on the spring-loaded tabs **320** and rotating them flush with the bottom surface **80** of the base block **20**. The elevation of the base block **20** can be variably selected by depressing spring-loaded tabs **310** of different thicknesses. While FIG. **13** illustrates three sets of tabs of varying thicknesses, any number of tabs can be used to provide a maximum number of elevation options.

In an alternative embodiment, shown in FIG. **15**, an insert **330** is installed in the well **22** of the base block **20**. The distance between the bottom surface **332** of the insert and its upper surface **334** is less than the depth of the well **22** of the base block **20**. By installing the insert, the user can increase the elevation of the crib and hence the tilt angle. One skilled in the art will appreciate that inserts **330** of varying depths may be used to provide a variety of elevation height options to the user and that the inserts **330** can be flat or include additional structure similar to ring **30**.

In an alternative embodiment, shown in FIG. **16**, an air cartridge **340** is used to variably increase or decrease elevation. One end of the air cartridge **340** is connected to a switch mechanism **342**, which allows a user to select increased elevation or decreased elevation. The air cartridge **340** is also connected to tubing **344**, which is inserted into housing **346**. As shown in FIG. **16**, the housing **346** holds the modified base block **20** and allows the base block **20** to move vertically about the housing **346** as the air pressure in the housing is increased or decreased. Alternatively, an air bladder **348** can be installed in the housing **346** and connected to the tubing **344**. As the pressure in the air bladder **348** expands, it causes the air bladder **348** to impinge upon the base block **20**, thereby pushing it upward. Instead of a switch, a button may be used to actuate the air cartridge **340**.

In an alternative embodiment, shown in FIG. **17**, an adjustment screw **354** is used to vary the height of base block **20**. Springs **352** and **358**, secured to housing **352**, press upward on base block **20**. Adjustment screw **354** raises or lowers the base block **20** by increasing or decreasing the compression of the springs **356** and **358**.

In an alternative embodiment, shown in FIG. **18**, a motor **360** is coupled with gear mechanism **362**, which in turn is mechanically coupled with base block **20**. A switch **364** is also coupled with the motor **360** so that a user can selectively adjust the elevation. If the user desires increased elevation, the motor **360** is actuated via the switch **364** and drives the base block **20** upward about the housing **366**. Likewise, the user can selectively decrease the elevation via the switch **364**, which actuates the motor **360** in the opposite direction, thereby lowering the base block **20**.

FIG. **19** illustrates another embodiment of the present invention. The base block **20** is inserted over housing **370**, which contains at least one track (preferably two) of holes or notches **372**. Spring-loaded pins **374** in base block **20**, when in the actuated position, mechanically engage the holes **372** in the housing **370**, thereby holding the base block **20** firmly within the housing **370**. A user can adjust the elevation up or down by pulling on the spring-loaded pins and moving the base block **20** upward or downward. Once the appropriate elevation is selected, the pins **374** are released, thereby engaging with the holes **372** in the housing **370** to secure the base block **20**.

In an alternative embodiment, shown in FIG. **20**, base block **20** rests on housing **382**, which includes an air-control valve **384**, air chamber or bladder **386**, air discharge means **388**, and optional support member **390**. The base block **20** may be raised by the user depressing air-control valve **384**, which increases the air in the air chamber or bladder **386**. As the pressure in air chamber or bladder **386** increases, it impinges upon the bottom surface of the base block **20**, thereby pushing it upward. The base block **20** can be lowered by depressing the air discharge means (similar to a piston of an ordinary bicycle tire inner tube) to evacuate the air and thereby decrease the upward pressure on the base block **20**.

In an alternative embodiment, shown in FIG. **21**, base block **20** is supported on support block **902** and may be raised by a lever mechanism similar to the means commonly used to raise and lower wheels of lawn mowers. The base block **20** includes a surface **906** with teeth **908** attached to it at varying heights. As illustrated in FIG. **21**, lever **904** includes a slot matching the teeth **908** of the base block **900** and can be rotated to be secured to the various teeth **908**. The height of the base block **20** is adjusted be altering the position of the lever **904**.

In another embedment of the present invention, shown in FIG. **1**, an optional centerpiece **60** is connected to the base blocks **20** so that all three elements form a substantially rigid structure. This allows for the installation of both legs **204** of the crib **200** into the base blocks **20** nearly simultaneously. Without centerpiece **60**, legs **204** of the crib **200** must either be installed one after another or both the base blocks **20** must be placed independently in the appropriate position next to legs **204** prior to installation. The embodiment with a centerpiece **60** presents an advantage to the user, particularly a parent holding a small child, in that the user can install elevator **10** by lifting the crib **200** only once and using a foot to position the base blocks **20** appropriately.

Turning to FIG. **4**, the bottom surface **72** of the centerpiece **60** is shown. The centerpiece **60** may optionally include a non-slip surface **70** and slots **62** (only one shown) for securing to variable elevation blocks **86**. FIG. **9** illustrates a side view of the centerpiece **60** secured to the base block **20**. As shown in the figure, the centerpiece **60** in this embodiment has notches or studs **68**, which protrude through slots **34** in the base block **20**, thereby securing the centerpiece **60** over the base block **20**. In the preferred embodiment, the ends of the centerpiece **60** are substantially rounded to avoid creating a straight edge where the centerpiece **60** is secured to the base blocks **20**.

Alternatively, the centerpiece **60** may be attached to the base blocks **20** by fasteners, latches, or clips. In another embodiment, the width of the centerpiece **60** is slightly larger than inner side **26** of the base block **20** so that the centerpiece **60** fits snugly over the base block **20**. Other embodiments include the use of a hinge and pin mechanism similar to a common door hinge and the inclusion of grooves, slots, or notches in the base block **20** to which the centerpiece **60** fits snugly. An apparatus similar to a door handle may also be used. One skilled in the art will appreciate a multitude of different mechanisms and manners in which the centerpiece **60** can be secured to the base blocks **20**. The precise manner in which the centerpiece **60** is secured to the base blocks **20** is not material to the invention so long as they can be moved substantially simultaneously by pushing on the centerpiece **60**.

The centerpiece **60** may be a fixed predetermined length such as to accommodate a crib 30-inches in width or it may be adjustable to accommodate a variety of crib widths. In the preferred embodiment, the length of the centerpiece **60** is adjustable and includes two sleeves. FIG. **8** illustrates this embodiment, which includes one sleeve **74** that is slightly larger than the other sleeve **76** so that the narrower sleeve **76** can slide axially about the wider sleeve **74**. The length of the centerpiece **60** can be adjusted by pulling or pushing the sleeves together.

In another embodiment, as shown in FIG. **10**, the alternative centerpiece **60**A includes outer sleeves **64** and inner shaft **66**, to allow the length of centerpiece **60**A to be adjusted. Outer sleeves **64** are slidably secured about inner shaft **66** such that the length of the centerpiece **60** may be adjusted by sliding the outer sleeves axially about inner shaft **66**. Other manners in which the centerpiece **60**'s length may be adjusted are through the use of a series of blocks that interlock together allowing the user to selectively modify the length by choosing an appropriate number of blocks; two or more interlocking sleeves that may be contracted or expanded axially (telescopically) by exerting force on the ends of the centerpiece **60**; and a honeycomb style centerpiece **60** that has the ability to flex to a desired length. One skilled in the art would appreciate the multitude of different mechanisms and manners through which the width of the centerpiece **60** may be adjusted.

The preferred embodiment of the present invention can be used according to the following steps. First, the user determines the appropriate tilt angle desired and the corresponding elevation height. The user then determines whether the base block **20** will provide the desired elevation height or whether one or more variable elevation blocks **86** are to be used alone or in combination with the base block **20**. Second, the user lifts the end of the crib to be elevated. Third, the user places the base blocks **20** beneath the legs **204** of the crib to be elevated. If the preferred embodiment is used, the user may place both base blocks **20** simultaneously by aligning the centerpiece **60** to the appropriate location. If an embodiment of the invention is used without a centerpiece, the user will initially place the base block **20** next to one of the crib legs **204** and lower the crib, while pushing the base block **20** into place. The user then lifts the crib a second time to install the second base block **20**. Fourth, the user should ensure that the crib legs **204** are securely installed in the wells **22** of the base block **20** by shaking the crib or otherwise verifying its stability. The height of the crib elevation can later be adjusted by the

means discussed above, including adding or removing the variable elevation blocks **86** from the base blocks **20**.

The primary advantage of the present invention is that it provides a system and apparatus for reliably and securely elevating a crib or toddler bed. Another advantage of the present invention is that it provides a means by which the elevation height and tilt angle can be variably selected according to the user's desire. Other advantages of the present invention include, the use of rounded edges and padding to enhance the safety of the elevator for use around small children and toddlers. Yet another advantage is that both base blocks **20** can be installed substantially simultaneously through use of a centerpiece **60** secured at each end to a base block **20**. This eliminates the need to install each base block **20** separately, which may require the user to lift the crib more than once.

It should be apparent from the foregoing that an invention having significant advantages has been provided. While the invention is shown in only a few of its forms, it is not just limited, but is susceptible to various changes and modifications without departing from the spirit thereof.

We claim:

1. A system for elevating the height of a crib or toddler bed having legs and resting on a surface, the system comprising:

two base blocks, each base block having

a bottom surface,

an inner side,

an upper surface, and

a well, having side walls and a bottom surface, formed within the upper surface for accepting the leg of the crib or toddler bed; and

a centerpiece having two ends, each end connected to the inner side of one of the base blocks.

2. The system of claim **1**, wherein the centerpiece includes a means for variably adjusting the length of the centerpiece.

3. The system of claim **2**, wherein the means for variably adjusting the length of the centerpiece includes a centerpiece comprised of an inner sleeve and outer sleeve, the inner sleeve adapted to fit within the outer sleeve and capable of being slid along the axis of the outer sleeve to variably adjust the length of the centerpiece.

4. The system of claim **1** additionally including a means for variably adjusting the elevation of the crib or toddler bed.

5. The system of claim **4**, wherein the means for variably adjusting the elevation of the crib or toddler bed is comprised of two or more height adjustment blocks, each height adjustment block adapted to be placed between a base block and the surface to adjust the height of the crib or toddler bed to a selected level.

6. The system of claim **1**, wherein the base block additionally includes a ring secured to the bottom surface of the well for accepting a roller, ball, or coaster of the crib or toddler bed leg.

7. The system of claim **1**, wherein the base block additionally includes a slot formed in the bottom surface of the well for accepting the leg of a crib or toddler bed.

8. The system of claim **1**, further including a means for variably adjusting the elevation of the crib or toddler bed and wherein the centerpiece includes a means for variably adjusting the length of the centerpiece.

9. The system of claim **1**, wherein padding is disposed on the upper surface of the base blocks.

10. A system for elevating the height of a crib or toddler bed having legs and resting on a surface, the system comprising:

two base blocks, each base block having

a bottom surface,

an upper surface,

an inner side, and

a well, having side walls and a bottom surface, formed within the upper surface for accepting the leg of the crib or toddler bed, wherein the exposed edges of the base block are substantially rounded; and

a centerpiece having two ends, each end connected to the inner side of one of the base blocks, and having exposed edges, wherein the exposed edges of the centerpiece are substantially rounded.

11. The system of claim **10** additionally including two or more height adjustment blocks, each height adjustment block adapted to be placed between one of the base blocks and the surface to adjust the height of the crib or toddler bed to a selected level.

12. The system of claim **10** additionally including padding disposed on the exposed surfaces of the base blocks and centerpiece.

13. The system of claim **10**, wherein the centerpiece includes a means for variably adjusting the length of the centerpiece.

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